

... Welcome to Landings ...
A monthly newsletter from the Town of Upper Marlboro

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THE TOWN HALL IS OPEN WEEKDAYS

Board of Town Commissioners
Steve Sonnett, President
Joe Hourcle, George Leonnig



Town Hall
Upper Marlboro, Maryland



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October, 2009 vol. 4 no.10

Beautifying Our Town

Gorgeous Prince George's Day

Saturday, October 17th (9 a.m. at Town Hall)

Come help us beautify our Town! This year, we have received from the County: two Red Maple and four Holly trees, bundles of Black-Eyed Susans, Daylilies and Daffodil bulbs. There will be two planting sites this year—one at Town Hall and the other on Old Crain Highway at the Town entry sign.

Last year our volunteers greatly appreciated the “pre-dug” holes the Public Works crew prepared in advance for the planting of the trees. And such will be the case again this year! Though the planting only takes an hour (or two) — the sense of camaraderie and the results of our work will grow for many seasons to come!

We're looking forward to having our great group of volunteers return for this annual event and gladly welcome all newcomers.



Are You Registered to Vote in the Town Elections in January?

The time to vote for the Board of Town Commissioners is coming up soon. If you are not registered to vote, the deadline to register is Friday, December 4th at 5:00 p.m. If you are already registered through the Prince George's County Board of Elections and reside within the corporate limits of the Town, you are already registered for this election. Citizens who desire to register only with the Town and not with the County Board of Elections may still do so by registering at Town Hall during normal working hours, or, upon request, can receive an application by mail. Qualified voters must be at least 18 years of age and have lived in the corporate Town

limits for at least thirty days.

Any person desiring to be a candidate for office is required to submit a letter to that effect with the Town Clerk at Town Hall by 5:00 p.m., Monday, December 14th (at the latest). To qualify for candidacy, you must be at least 25 years of age and have lived in the Town at least two years. The 3 candidates that receive the largest number of votes shall be elected as the Board of Town Commissioners and serve a two-year term.

The polls will be open on Monday, January 4, 2010 at Town Hall from 1:00—8:00 p.m.

Are You Recycling? Local Efforts Make the Airwaves

Maryland Public Television will showcase Prince George's County's "single-stream" recycling program and the "green power" facilities at the Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill that convert landfill gas to electricity on "**Outdoors Maryland**" on Tuesday, October 13, at 7:30 p.m. (check local listing) and Saturday, October 17th at 5:30 p.m.

The segment, "Waste Not", produced by **Upper Marlboro resident Dan Sonnett**, features the county's innovative efforts to reduce the amount of trash that ends up in the landfill and market the recycled materials they collect.

Tune in and see how, through recycling, your trash can become the county's treasure!

President's Report

The lazy, hazy days of summer are over. The tentative full agenda for the October 12th Town Meeting (7:30 p.m. at Town Hall) shows that activity has picked up. We will be dealing with several agenda items that are important to the Town, so I urge you to make your voice heard by coming to the Town meeting and participating in your local government.

Budget Review

The first waves of State revenue cuts to the Town anticipated in the September *Landings* have been made. State aid for highways and streets was reduced from \$31,000 to \$3,100 and State Police aid was reduced from an anticipated \$20,000 to \$14,080. Thus, State revenue cuts total \$33,800. A possible second wave of State revenue cuts may be known by the October Town Meeting. Most other revenue sources are within budget estimates with the exceptions of interest income and income taxes, which are trending somewhat lower than budgeted. On the expense side, several cost items have come in under budget with further expense savings expected. I don't wish to paint too dire a picture of our budget outlook, however, we should have a strategy in place should things get worse. Currently, we are holding back on going forward with \$50,000 worth of capital improvements and purchases until later in the budget year when we will be able to make more accurate budget estimates.

Parking Meter Rate Increase

A resolution increasing the parking meter rate to 50 cents per hour will be on the agenda for the October Town Meeting. Currently the Town charges 25 cents per hour while the County charges 75 cents per hour. Parking meter revenue for fiscal year 2009 was \$23,168—an increase over past years, most likely due to the reopening of the Courthouse.

Fiscal Year 2009 Audit

Now for some good news. The FY09 audit has gone smoothly with final delivery of a "clean" audit expected by the end of October. The draft numbers, which we expect to be the final numbers, show a surplus for the fiscal year with each Department within its budget. The thirty-three page audit examines the Town's finances from several different accounting points of view. For management purposes, I find the "Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Budget Actual-Non-GAAP Budgetary Basis General Fund" statement to be the most useful. It shows a \$220,754 surplus for the year created by above budget revenues and lower than budgeted expenses. On the revenue side, above budget revenues from personal property taxes, income

taxes and parking fines were the major contributors. On the expense side, the leading contributors were salaries/benefits, waste disposal fees and unspent capital improvement funds.

Board of Supervisors of Elections

Under the terms of our Charter, during each odd numbered year the President must appoint, with Board approval, three members to the Board of Supervisors of Elections. I am pleased to announce the appointment of Yvonne Tucker/Chairperson, John McCauly and Allison Taylor to the Board. Subject to Board of Commissioners approval at the October meeting, the Supervisors will be then sworn in at the meeting. In many ways this is a thankless job, so we want to convey our appreciation to these residents for their time and dedication to the Town.

Additional information on the upcoming election can be found on the reverse side of this newsletter.

Judicial Review of County's Rezoning in Town

Over the Town's objection, the County Council (sitting as the District Council) approved the rezoning of a residential property in Town from Residential R-80 to Commercial Office (C-O). After consultation with the Town's attorney, we believe the Council did not approve the rezoning with the required six votes. The Board of Commissioners will consider authorizing a petition for judicial review at the October meeting.

SHA Revises Lines on Main Street

After numerous complaints and discussions with the Town, the State Highway Administration (SHA) revised the lineage on the west section of Main Street. It removed the private parking signs on the north side of the street, moved the center line to the north and placed side and barrier stripes on the north side. With parking no longer permitted on the north side on Main Street, vehicles including emergency, buses and trucks will no longer have to cross the double yellow line to pass through this section of Main Street. Thank you to the State Highway Administration.

Debt Policy

On the agenda for the October Meeting will be the adoption of a Town debt policy. The adoption of a debt policy is now required by the State. The Town's authority to incur debt is governed by our Charter with the only apparent limitation being a cap on general obligation bonds. General obligation bonds are limited to 2% of the assessable base of real property located in the Town absent a referendum in which case the maximum is 10%. The debt policy adopts these limitations and others recommended in examples set forth by the State.

— Steve Sonnett

POLICE REPORT / SEPT. 2009

Town Citations: 141

State Citations: 54

Out-of-Town Incidents:

2 Breaking & Entering

In-Town Incidents:

1 Vandalism

1 Recovered Stolen Auto

2 Warrant Service

2 Theft

8 Vehicle Impounds

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

TOWN MEETING: Tuesday, October 13th, 7:30 p.m., at Town Hall. The meeting is open to the public.

WORK SESSION: (date to be determined), at Town Hall. The meeting is open to the public.

COLUMBUS DAY: Monday, October 12. Town offices will be closed all day and will reopen Tuesday at 9:00 a.m.

TRASH PICK-UP FOR COLUMBUS DAY (regular & bulk) will be collected on TUESDAY, October 13th.